

14.3-6

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early thirteenth century. Saddau-¹ammi seems to have been a Semite, roughly contemporary with Moses in Egypt. The name is almost identical with the 'Ammi-Sadday of the Priestly list. In a similar way the element Sûr 'Mountain' was regarded as unlikely in personal names owing to the lack of ancient parallels. Those parallels have now been furnished. Gray maintained that the proportion of names with the element El far exceeded the proportions of the use of the name in early Israel, but matched the proportions of late times. However, the various onomastica of the second millennium had a superabundance of names with the element El, as our new evidence amply shows. The curve of usage which Gray drew actually reflects a resurgent popularity of the name-element. Hence the proportion of El names in our list now supports its antiquity. Moreover, the majority of the single elements in the Numbers lists occur in combination in the milieu to which tradition ascribes them. The elements 'am ('people,' i.e., 'kinsman'), 'ah ('brother'), and 'ab 'father,' all referring to the link of kinship felt with a god, are most common appellatives of deity, both in our list and in the Amorite onomasticon from the middle of the second millennium. As Amorite names from the Mari tablets continue to be published, the evidence grows stronger and stronger. While we are still unable to fix the precise historical origin of the name list, it is an old document which accurately reflects the name usage of Mosaic times.

14.5-13⁴⁶

W. F. Albright has recently defended the antiquity of still another old Priestly document, the list of spies in Numbers 13.4-16. While the archaeological documentation of these names is not so striking, it nevertheless must be fitted into the earlier period.

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Martin Noth has shown that the Priestly list of stations involved in the Exodus (Numbers 33.2-49) rests on an old document quite independent of the JE narrative of the Exodus and journey to Canaan. This old record seems to come from the time of the early monarchy at latest, and may, as Noth gives good reason to believe, have been developed from a standard list of stations on a pilgrimage route from Canaan to Sinai. If such be the case, it is understandable how Priestly writers took such traditional stations, reversed their order, and used them as supplementary date for the route of Israel from Sinai to the Promised Land.

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An Exilic date for the major Priestly work seems almost certain now. Its language can scarcely be post-Exilic, since there are no Aramaisms. Its theology is clearly reflected in the writings of the oldest post-Exilic prophets, particularly Zechariah It must be closely connected with the work of Ezekiel.

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These recent attempts to seek out the "nuclear" Priestly stratum reflect a new respect for the historical core of P. The conflations, doublets, and additions which allow separation of Priestly materials into two or more parts also testify to the age of its sources, but at the same time to the heterogeneous character of its origin. We cannot use the Priestly materials uncritically. Priestly tradition in its present form is dogmatic and late; nevertheless, it is a valuable witness, often more reliable in detail than the older oral sources. In the last analysis, it can in no way represent pious fraud, but rather the best efforts of priestly scholars, who tried to piece together the golden past from materials available to them.